

of a strong deficit reduction plan to any increase in the debt ceiling.

Congress should attach a balanced and broad-based budget plan to the debt ceiling increase. The plan should include smart cuts that would total at least \$4 trillion over the next 10 years. The budget agreement should also protect important investments in a strong economic future.

We can't delay any longer. We can't pass these tough decisions on to our children and grandchildren. The people we serve sent us here to get this done, and it is time for both sides to do just that.

GET RUNAWAY SPENDING UNDER CONTROL

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, Americans awoke this morning to the heart-breaking news that unemployment has increased to 9.1 percent. The U.S. economy added only 55,000 jobs in the last month. The American people are understandably concerned. But the numbers don't tell the tale. Beneath those numbers are literally millions of American families who meet this morning's headlines with heartbreak and heartache because the opportunities just aren't there.

The truth is more government, more spending, more regulation, and more taxes of the recent past are stifling our recovery. But nothing is stifling our recovery more than runaway spending in Washington, D.C.

Even as we speak today, Congress and this administration are locked in a debate over increasing the Nation's credit card, increasing the debt ceiling. And let me say from my heart, some people don't see the connection between the debate over debt and red ink and the debate over jobs, but they are related.

If we will take the decisive step to put our fiscal house in order, we will restore confidence in capital markets, and businesses and individuals will invest in ways that will put Americans back to work. There should be no debt ceiling increase without real and meaningful cuts in the way we spend the people's money in the short term and the long term. Get spending under control in Washington, D.C., and we will get this economy moving again.

□ 1400

THE PRESIDENT: WRONG ON ALL COUNTS

(Mr. GOHMERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOHMERT. The Speaker is to be commended for bringing these two bills to the floor. Unfortunately, we have a President who cared more about what the Arab League and the U.N. thought

than he did his own elected Congress. We've been kept in the dark about the basis for his decisions, and I voted "no" on our Speaker's bill because he didn't need any more time.

The President should be aware, Madam Speaker, that there are an awful lot of people who are ready to switch their votes and to vote "yes." I would prefer that we not do it through the War Powers. We could do like the Democrats did in '74 and just cut off the spending.

It is ridiculous. He said we'd enforce a no-fly zone. That's it. We wouldn't put ground troops in Libya. He said that NATO was going to take over and that we wouldn't be that involved.

Wrong on all counts.

We know from the rules of the House the President wouldn't lie, but he sure is misrepresenting things.

LIBYA: THE PRESIDENT'S WAR

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, every Member of this body, every elected official in the United States, every member of our military takes an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America. We do not take an oath to the President of the United States.

The war in Libya is the President's war. The Constitution requires that Congress declare war. The War Powers declaration requires that Congress be authorized and notified if the President leads us into war. This has not occurred. The President's war in the name of humanity, although it may be a good idea in the moral sense and Qadhafi is a rotten person, violates the Constitution of the United States. It violates statutory law that we have passed.

It is incumbent upon this body to stop the war in Libya. That is the President's war and not the war of the people of the United States.

OUR DEFINING MOMENT: RECLAIMING THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, this House has just had a great constitutional debate about the meaning of article I, section 8, where the Founders made it very clear that the war power is placed in the hands of Congress.

This debate that occurred today is not an end. It is a beginning. It is a beginning because we have seen one resolution which derived its presence from a resolution that I put forward on a bipartisan basis. One resolution passed which put the White House on notice that Congress is beginning to take a more appropriate role with respect to the Constitution, and that's a good thing.

But make no mistake that this issue of liberty is not going to go away. With the spending soon approaching \$1 billion and with NATO openly talking about the commission of ground troops, we'll be back here another day to consider further what our appropriate constitutional role is.

I want to congratulate Members on both sides of the aisle no matter how you voted. This is our moment to begin to reclaim the Constitution.

PUTTING THE U.S. ECONOMY BACK ON TRACK

(Mr. SCALISE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Speaker, just today we got the bad news again that the jobless numbers have gone up, that our unemployment numbers have gone up and that much smaller job increases were created than were expected.

I think, as we continue to see unemployment going up over 9 percent—9.1 percent now according to the latest numbers—it is very clear that the President's spending and borrowing agenda has been a dismal failure. Yet the President continues to go down that path.

It is time for the President to start working with the House Republicans, who have sent jobs bill after jobs bill over to the Senate. For whatever reason, the President and the liberals in the Senate don't want to address the ability that we have presented to create jobs.

One real clear example is in our State of Louisiana where we have lost over 13,000 jobs because of the President's policies, where they won't let our people get back to the work of drilling safely for energy in America.

We don't want to get our energy from Brazil or from the Middle Eastern countries, many of whom don't like us and who use the billions we send to them to do us harm. We could keep that money here. We could keep those jobs here. There is a plan to do it. Plan after plan has been sent to the Senate, and for whatever reason, the Senate and the President continue to ignore them. Let's finally get our economy back on track.

THE MANY CHORDS OF MAKING IT IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

When we finish what sometimes may seem a complicated debate, where both sides can seemingly make sense when we have the time to reflect upon the week's work or the work and philosophies of the different political perspectives in this House, I believe it is very

important to communicate with your colleagues, so let me be as clear as I can be.

As I heard my friends on the other side of the aisle, one after one, claim that the Libyan war was the President's war, well, today, on June 3, 2011, the President of the United States happens to be President Obama. Yet if you look at the Constitution of the United States, which provides provisions for the separation of powers, there is a section that articulates that the Congress, irrespective of any Presidential person in place, declares war.

So I would ask my friends on the other side of the aisle: Would they have been as quick to rise to the floor on the Iraq war, which could be called the "Bush war"? or the continued 10-year plus war in Afghanistan the "Bush war"?

When we discuss these issues for the American people, we have to be true to ourselves and the Constitution. There was a reason the Founding Fathers separated out the right to declare war. That reason, of course, was to protect you, the American people. When we send men and women into battle, it should be a deliberative process, but we should also have the right to defend ourselves.

The initial attack in Afghanistan—that was the first act—was in response to the heinous and horrific attack of al Qaeda on the soil of the United States. From my perspective, the immediate response of President Bush was legitimate. The question becomes: What came afterwards? The Congress was never given the chance to declare war. Subsequently, there was a statutory discussion and vote that gave unending opportunities and authority for the war to go on and on and on.

□ 1410

Buried in the Afghanistan decision was the authority to go on and on and on. The sad part about it was that we did not go on in Afghanistan. We distracted our troops and went into a war that saw the large numbers of our soldiers lose their lives in a war that had actually never been declared by the United States of America and the United States Congress.

We have something today in 2011 called the Arab Spring. But I don't think Americans understand that, and they, frankly, believe that we cannot promote democracy everywhere in the world. Policymakers understand the crucialness of what is going on in the Arab area as it relates to the geopolitics, the political structure of the world.

But I know what Americans of goodwill do understand: the slaughter of a people. The slaughter and the misuse of power in Bahrain; the misuse of power in Egypt; the gruesome misuse of power to the extent that a mutilated body of a 13-year-old boy can be dumped in their parents' home in Syria; and, yes, the violence in Libya. Americans understand that and I understand it.

So I applaud the President of the United States for going in in Libya to stop the horrific violence. He went in in coalition with our NATO troops. That same action occurred under President Clinton, going in with NATO, taking the lead in this instance, in the slaughter of Muslims in Kosovo and the horrible wars in Bosnia.

I happened to have been able to go on an initial inaugural mission into Bosnia—the former Yugoslavia—and Croatia, and I walked the streets of Sarajevo and I saw mothers who had not seen their sons for 10 or 12 years and asked us where they were. It was a violent time.

So the Libyan action by the President was an appropriate one. He happens to be a Democratic President. I applaud his action. But the Constitution is not labeled by Democratic or Republican. It has no provisions to exempt if you happen to be a Democrat with a Democratic President. So my values argue for consistency, and that is adhering to the Constitution.

I believe Resolution 292, Mr. BOEHNER's resolution that was crafted in the last 24 hours, was a nice statement about a report. But I don't vote on actions on the floor out of contempt and dislike for anyone.

Let me be very clear. I applaud President Barack Obama for the courage that he has taken in moving forward to establish America's mark as a believer in democracy and justice and encouraging the people in the Arab States to stand up for their rights and to object and reject the oppressiveness of their regimes, and I hope that NATO becomes strategic in what they're doing so that we can be successful.

But if we are going to be true to the Constitution of the United States that is, in fact, part of the document that we hold true, then we must hold any Commander in Chief to the same standard.

The War Powers Resolution asks that the President of the United States come to the Congress within 60 days. The constitutional provision in article II requires that the Congress declare war. One could argue that we have not declared war on Arab States and we've not declared war on Libya. We're at war. We're at war because al Qaeda declares that they are at war with us. So it is a dicey circumstance.

I, instead, voted for the action to occur under the War Powers Resolution that was just occurring today, a vote that we lost, a vote that I would have voted for under President Bush, under President Reagan, under President Carter, and with the opportunity, under President Clinton, as the wars proceeded to a long extent of time.

However, we are dealing now in the backdrop of a failed resolution. But I voted because it is necessary to be consistent as to whether you believe the Constitution and the authority of the Congress and the separation of three branches is a valid one to protect the rights of the American people. And I believe that.

But my message to General Qadhafi is this: If you have any sense of human dignity left, you will stop the murderous attacks on your people. I am sensitive enough to offer my sympathy to you for the loss of your family members because I believe in the value of human life. War is ugly. But every effort of peace that we have made has been one that you've ignored. Every effort that we have made, every step that we have taken toward peace you have ignored. You have arrogantly insisted on the world stage that you're in charge, while your country is in a state of confusion and disaster. You have opened the doors to the confusion and the violence of terrorist cells, al Qaeda and other ne'er-do-wells who desire no good to you or your people. You've allowed groups to, in essence, begin to spark so that the continued frustration of world leaders in trying to bring resolution continues; but, more importantly, the violence of all falls on the backs of innocent women and children, young boys and families in Libya.

I feel a kinship to the Libyan people, as a human being and as someone whose heritage started on the continent of Africa. But the one good thing about America is that we care about all people no matter what background they come from, no matter what country. I know that because I've had the privilege of representing the United States in South and Central America, in Asia, on the continent of Africa, in the Mideast and Europe and other places maybe not mentioned—because we care.

Mr. Qadhafi, I beg of you, as an African who has met with the President of South Africa, who knows that the African Union would like for you to cease and desist this violent attack on your own people, stand down. And I would ask, as I have asked before, leave the country. Let us find the kind of government that might, in fact, move Libya forward. And if your people decide that you should stay, then you should have a reformation and a change not only of mind but of heart. The violence does not get you anywhere and it is both insane and absurd.

So I would hope that as this vote was taken, that it is not in any way, as was evidenced by the discussion in the debate by the Republicans, it is not Mr. Obama's war. He is the President of the United States and the Commander in Chief, and it was a determination to go in to stop the murderous acts of those who were killing innocent people.

Read your early history. The early Founders of this Nation in the Revolutionary War against Great Britain had other countries come to the aid of this little, tiny, baby series of States that called themselves the United States of America. It has been the world order for centuries that big countries or those who are able will go to the aid of those who are not able. And this vote today should not in any way deny the respect that is owed to the President of

the United States. This is a vote premised on the Constitution and reflecting the desires of the American people, that we do not live in a dictatorship and that if you're a Member of the United States Congress, come here and do your job.

□ 1420

And our job is defined by the Constitution.

I believe that our duty was partly handled today, and I would encourage our President, as he has done over the stages of the Afghan war and now the continued redeploying in Iraq of our soldiers, and I would add that we are in an engagement of discussion that gives us the roadmap for redeploying or moving toward a resolution in Libya.

I would also join in the debate that I've just made on the question of Libya with the need for the immediate review and designation of time for redeployment of our troops out of Afghanistan, and the President has indicated that he expects that that redeployment will begin in July 2011.

My plea to the President is, as we look at these economic times, when America is crying out for jobs, when the middle class feels splashed and unattended to, when others believe our jobs are not creeping offshore and overseas, but fleeting and flying and literally by way of speed that is faster than sound, it is time now to find the mutual courage to say to the people of Afghanistan that we have provided a duly elected government, a parliament. We have laid down our lives. We have built up the Afghan national security forces, which I was introduced to in the many times that I've been into Afghanistan, all parts, including Kabul and Kandahar and places beyond. I know there are good people there.

So I'd ask the President of the United States to ramp up the redeployment, bring home 50,000, 100,000 troops and begin to let those troops rebuild their lives. Invest in military readiness and preparedness and find a closure to the presence of United States boots on the ground in Afghanistan.

To President Karzai, I ask you to stand up and be counted, to initiate policies that would end the poppy growing and heroin production, to allow girls and boys to go to school, to produce your teachers and lawyers, doctors and scientists, generals, captains and leaders of government. I would ask President Karzai to provide the funding and resources for your Afghan national security forces. I would ask him to weed out the Taliban that is destroying his own people in the mountains of Afghanistan. And, yes, I would ask whether or not it is even possible that all of us could claim the value of peace, and by doing that, it would not be non-courageous to stand up and accept the fact that we have won in Afghanistan and we've won in Iraq, and we thank our soldiers.

And so I'm on the floor today thanking my colleagues because last week

we voted 419 votes to declare a National Day of Honor for our returning troops from combat areas, more than we've ever done in any other war, and to celebrate them all over America. So I am not asking for America to leave any battle place with her head held down. Our Vietnam vets, during a very tumultuous time and a war that we disagreed with, should have been welcomed home for their service, for their duty, for the reason that they took up arms—not of their own accord, but because a President called them.

I believe America learned her lesson as she focuses on trying to help our returning combat veterans with jobs and education and health care. We know that we should honor them. So with the amendment that I passed on the floor, 419 votes, I hope the American people will call their Congressperson and thank them, but also ask that that proclamation be declared and that we have a National Day of Honor to welcome our soldiers home from all around the world in combat places.

As we welcome them home, I think it is extremely important to recognize that America has a number of concerns. Those concerns are the tragedies that we face, the horrific loss of life in Joplin, Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, all the flooding that has gone on. People in the United States are suffering.

So what does it mean to raise the debt ceiling? What it means to raise the debt ceiling is not what Americans believe—there they go again, spending, spending, spending. What it actually means is that we're saying to working Americans and middle class Americans, we feel deeply about your inability to pay your mortgage, to pay tuition costs. If you have one or two credit cards with those old interest rates of 19, 20, 21 percent that we've been able to bring down somewhat because of legislation we've passed, we understand that. If you don't have a job, if someone in your life doesn't have a job, we understand that. We understand folks that don't have a job, but they don't have a job, a home, a car, a place to live.

The debt ceiling actually is the ability to pay our bills. It is not the ability to spend and find ways to spend money unnecessarily; it is the ability to create the jobs that America is crying out for. The 9 percent is not a reflection so much of the President of the United States not desiring and working hard to create jobs. Let me remind my colleagues that it was Democrats and the President that helped to, in essence, provide a safety net for the automobile industry. A lot of people complained about that. But we were in the middle of the fight not to pay special interests off; we were in the fight to save the auto industry of the United States of America.

It was the right thing to do. Two big reasons: one, the infrastructure of automobile building was car dealerships across America that had thousands, millions of workers selling

American cars. You let that industry collapse, and you would let, in essence, some small town in America literally have no economy. It might have been that the car dealership was the largest business in that small area.

I'll add three. The second is we obligated the industry to pay us back, and we have been paid back. We, the United States taxpayers, have been paid back. And you know what else? They have actually brought jobs back to the United States of America. If I wasn't in this very august place, I would say hallelujah, celebrate, applaud: jobs have been brought back to the United States. Ford, of course, did not take those resources. We applaud them. Some of you are buying some new smart cars by GM. Some of you are buying new smart cars by Chrysler—better gas mileage, got a new attitude.

We gave the American innovative genius the opportunity to survive. We allowed inventiveness to thrive. We built on Henry Ford's genius, and we let it spread around. And as well, as we developed jobs for monies that the taxpayers invested, and we put the right kind of restraint for you to be reinvested.

The debt ceiling means that it allows us, the government, to create jobs for you. You turn the economy and invest back. We then provide the protection for you through jobs or maybe unemployment insurance or maybe Social Security or maybe Medicare, or maybe when you're at your lowest end. When you have lost loved ones in a natural disaster that you cannot comprehend, it is the cause of the Federal Government to be able to pay the bills, to be able to come to a place where there is no fire station, no houses of worship, no hospital, no schools, no homes, for us to come and to be of help.

□ 1430

I don't know how we can abdicate our responsibilities. I don't know how we can frivolously play with raising the debt ceiling. I don't know how Republicans can put on the floor of the House a bill under suspension, which requires a two-thirds vote, to make a joke of helping the people in Joplin, in Alabama, up and down the Mississippi and whatever other disaster may come. How do you make a joke with that? How in essence do you in the face of the frustration of those who have suffered? I have not experienced a tornado, but I have experienced and walked the streets during hurricanes. I have seen in my own town the pain. I have come up to doors and knocked on persons' doors where someone has laid dying because they have just gone through a process where all the lights are out and they're on oxygen. I've seen seniors in homes that cannot be repaired. I've seen people lose items that can never be replaced. And so that is what your Federal Government does. And do you mean to tell me we would make a mockery of raising the debt ceiling so that America can simply pay her bills?

There is a value to reducing the deficit. And might I just say something with all good intention. It is always the person who has got money in their pocket, who's got a wallet full of credit cards that they can pay for, that can smile when you're talking about Social Security and Medicare and has an uncaring spirit. Because it doesn't matter to them. It is the philosophy that has not made this country great, the philosophy of "I've got mine, you get yours."

Young people, I have gotten my college education. I don't care whether you can go to college or not. I don't even care if you get a job. "I've got mine." That's not what this Nation is all about. I will not tell the people of Missouri, Alabama and places around, "I'm okay in Houston. My house is still functioning, the hurricane season hasn't hit me yet, so I'm not going to worry about your tragedy." Is that America? Is that how we built the greatness of this country? Did we ignore our returning troops coming home from World War II? Or did we say to them, "We're giving you the GI Bill"?

The Democrats gave the second GI Bill. President Truman gave the first. We gave with President Obama the greatest GI Bill in the history of America except the one that was passed by President Truman. We said that we care. We built on the values of a country that always rises to the occasion. And because of that, those people who desire goodness and greatness, they look to the United States of America. I am glad, regardless of whatever faith we believe in, whatever our background is or whoever's our neighbor, that we're a country that cares. And I will tell you just if you follow what your grandmother says, being a good Samaritan will always come back to you. Being kind to someone will always come back to you.

Therefore, I believe that it is imperative that we lift the debt ceiling for America to pay her bills. I am tired of smashing the middle class. I am tired of leaving them on their own. I am tired of them watching jobs go overseas when we have such a brilliant population of innovative, creative, loving people. We overcame some of the hills and valleys in America. We went through the civil rights movement and the era where those who were of a different color suffered under the devastating indignity of segregation. America rose to the occasion. It is not perfect, but we recognize the value of equality of all. You're not relegated to the back of the bus. You're not dismissed from hotels and restaurants. You are open and allowed to travel on America's transportation modes. You even can be accepted into colleges on your own merit and not on quotas. And yes, if you apply for a job, the laws at least protect you, that no matter what your background, that you're given an equal opportunity.

America has traversed some of those difficult valleys. We respect women

and a woman's equality. We are able to say that women can be pilots and Presidents and Senators and doctors and heads of organizations and engineers and train conductors and anything a little girl can admire and aspire to be. That's the kind of America that is understanding of the crisis that these people face.

And I'm sorry that the debate on the debt ceiling has been characterized as Democratic and Republican and these are the deficit-cutters and these are the wild-eyed spending-spreers going into the shopping malls of America and grabbing things off shelves. It is important to note that one of the greatest Presidents that we have admired—my little girl used to call him Grandpa—Ronald Reagan asked Congress to lift the debt ceiling in 1983, not because he was a spendthrift but because he understood the responsibility of paying America's bills. And, my friends, I remind you, can we not pay America's bills?

I want to discuss how we do that, how we lift the condition of Americans. We do it like we've done it before. We make it in America. Now I like one part of it that says, We make it in America. Everybody needs to have a chance to make it in America. The young people that are graduating in 2011 should have the right to make it in America. By the way, might I just say, congratulations to all of the graduates across America. From the preschooler that's going to kindergarten, to the elementary child that puts on the robe and is inspired, to the middle school and to the high school graduates of whom I will go home to this weekend and greet any number of high school graduates in my constituency who are making that first leap of faith, to the college graduates who are feeling so empowered to graduate in such a great Nation, to those who are getting graduate degrees, our new lawyers and doctors and business persons, our physicists and chemists and biologists, the geniuses that will go into the laboratories of America.

Congratulations to all of you.

That is why I believe it is important to make it in America. The Democrats have launched a major initiative. I wish we could get our friends to join us in a real jobs bill, of which the President of the United States has committed to introducing a real jobs bill, to make it in America. Many of us in our hearings will ask the witnesses that represent the United States Government, we want you to buy America and make it in America. And I'm not an isolationist. I believe America has been enormously generous in buying goods from other countries, proud of them. We're glad to help developing nations. We're glad to support micro-credits and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation that allows investments overseas, but we don't want our jobs to be taken overseas. I don't want to see teenagers with double-digit unemployment, particularly in the Af-

rican American community. I don't want rural communities to suffer because of the lack of employment. I dread this coming summer when there's no money for summer jobs for young people who are trying to save for going into school in the fall. Sometimes the only resources a family has may be the summer job of a teenager. But we have always encouraged teenagers to learn how to work in the decorum of the workplace. Just look what we're doing now.

For that very reason, can I give a challenge to this Nation, can I give a challenge to the businesses, can I give a challenge to corporate America: Bring some young people, maybe unpaid, to be able to be interns.

□ 1440

City governments, maybe unpaid, bring some young people into your offices. Teach them something else but hanging out on the streets. Let them see an adult role model working. But we might not have to have that kind of plea if we could make it in America again.

In the 18th Congressional District in Texas and all around America, we're going to be honoring the individuals who have manufacturing businesses. I would ask you, colleagues, to go and shake the hand of a manufacturer who's making something, who's struggling to keep the doors open, who's making a widget or a gadget. That's what we're talking about.

Solar panels. Wouldn't it be a shock if we went across America and began to make our own solar panels, our windmills of course, that create wind energy. Unfortunately, I hate to tell you that that equipment, that kind of technology we get from overseas. If I wasn't on the floor of the House, I would hold my head down.

When has America needed to depend on someone else, something that was their idea or that they could make better? Again, as I said, I don't mind being part of the world family, where we share and we buy items and we help develop economies, but not to the point where all our jobs, like I said, are taking wings and flying away. What kind of America is that for our young people that are graduating in 2011?

So I want us to focus on building buses, building submarines, and major aircraft carriers, building bridges, freeways, improving dams, building the rails, or the trains for high-speed rail, of which I am an avid supporter, and requires an investment in this country to be able to be fiscally conservative as well as to ensure that we use our energy resources right.

To have an energy policy as well that speaks about all of the energy resources, to do them effectively, as the President has articulated; and to make sure that if we are using fossil fuels, whether it's oil or gas, that we are doing it here in the United States and that we are in fact doing it safely and securely.

That we appreciate wind and we make the equipment or the kind of technology right here in the United States. Solar, that we make all of our panels. Natural gas, that we do it safely and securely, and that we create jobs that way. That we bring down the cost of energy. That we stop calling upon the American people to take \$5 out of their pocket and put a few ounces, if you will, of gas in their car.

That we begin to recognize the pain of America, and the way that we recognize the pain of America is that we begin to go aggressively toward the American people with solutions. And the demagoguery of raising the debt ceiling, and I'm not going to vote on it unless you burden it down with draconian cuts that will end Medicare as we know it on all seniors, eliminate Social Security, destroy Medicaid and throw it to the winds so that disabled children suffering from autism or those who have other diseases cannot be taken care of, that's not the America that has made us so great.

It is one that pulls up our pants and puts on our shoes, pulls up our skirts and gets empowered by the joy of work and helping others. And when we did that, we were able to invest in this Nation.

I will not vote on a debt ceiling increase that destroys Medicare as we know it. And I will not vote on a debt ceiling increase that destroys Social Security, or Medicaid, or violates the premise that this country owes a debt of gratitude to veterans and returning soldiers. That's what my friends on the other side of the aisle are trying to sell the American people, a bill of goods. A bill of goods that the philosophy that is anti to President Reagan, who asked for the increase in the debt ceiling himself, that we cannot count and speak at the same time. I believe America is greater than that.

We can bring down the debt with a very meticulous plan over a period of time, the same way you save for college or plan to bring down your debt, or stop using credit cards. We can do that. But at the same time, we can pay America's bills. And we cannot leave one American alongside of the road, languishing and reaching out for help, and we say there is no room at the inn.

Where is the America that is a Good Samaritan? Where is America that sent young men to war, World War II, and if you talk to any of that generation they say, I didn't know all the facts, but I was glad to be part of what America was standing for, helping those who were languishing alongside the road.

We have had any number of conflicts, and some that I have agreed or disagreed with; but the premise was, whether we had the agreement of the American people on the premise of that conflict, it was to help someone along the road.

I am now calling in a clarion cry for Americans to help America. I am calling on this Congress for this Congress to help America. I am calling on the

President, as a friend of the American people, to help America. And to do that, whatever is heard that will now come behind me, and disjangled chords will sound attractive, and it will be about who is going to burden our grandchildren and the long-term debt, but it will not be infused with values by many of our faiths.

Those of us of a Christian faith and many other faiths have an element of the document under which they worship that talks about the Good Samaritan and charity and love. And albeit that you are asking why on the floor of the House, it is because the infusion of those tenets were part of the design of this Nation when we organized around the concept of forming a more perfect Union. And when the Declaration of Independence said that we seek to pursue happiness, we hold these truths self-evident that all of us are created equal, we don't abandon that just because it happens to be June 3, 2011. We are able to keep those values, and those values have kept this country on a straight and productive path.

All the noise that comes sometimes in a confused sound to the ears of the American people, if as Members of Congress we can declare our commitment to helping the American people and keeping the values of the American people in place, and that of our faith, that is to help, to love, and to present charity to those who are in need, there is no limit to the greatness of America. And there is no limit to the restoration of making it in America, both in terms of our success and survival, and then in terms of making things that we need and putting America back to work.

Madam Speaker, I am grateful for being yielded this time by the Speaker of the House, and I am grateful for the opportunity to live in a Nation where disagreement does not result, in this century and even in the past century, of taking up arms against each other. I am grateful that maybe in the debate that we have on the floor of the House at some point my colleagues can hear not disjangled sounds of discord and disrespect and dislike, but they can actually hear the chords of reason, my friends, that to pay for our bills as you pay for yours, we must do the right thing: raise the debt ceiling, and to be able to preserve Medicare as we know it, and not to destroy it as it is being destroyed by the budget proposals of the Republican Party.

It is necessary, if you will, to be able to come together and to listen in one voice, finally, that we act to help America.

With that, Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1450

HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 60 min-

utes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BURGESS. This afternoon, the Congressional Health Care Caucus wants to talk a little bit about the future of the government's role in health care in this country.

I recognize, for those of you studying your Constitution as of this very moment, you don't find the government's role for controlling health care in this country, but we will do our best to help you understand why we are where we are and perhaps where we are going with some of the Federal programs that are run by the Federal Government. Again, the Congressional Health Care Caucus, the Web site healthcaucus.org.

This hour, I am grateful to the leadership of the Republican Party for the use of this hour. I and my cochair, Mr. G.T. THOMPSON from Pennsylvania, will be leading the discussion.

We have had a lot of talk over the past 4 weeks about the future of Medicare in this country. Certainly, if you look at the three plans that are on the table right now—and I understand you may be scratching your head and saying, Wait a minute. I thought there was only one plan out there. I thought there was only the Republican plan. But the Medicare Trustees Report that was issued some 2, 2½ weeks ago, came forward and articulated how the Medicare trust fund would be exhausted in the year 2023 or 2024. This is a significant fact that right now this Congress and the White House are trying to ignore, but it can't be ignored, and that's why the responsible Republican budget passed in April would deal with this fact.

One plan would be to continue on the current course and make no change at all, and that is what the trustees' report articulated. The trust fund is exhausted by 2023 or 2024. That means, then, all funds to pay for part A, part B, and part D of Medicare, hospitalizations, physician payments, and pharmaceutical payments would all come from the Federal Treasury. The trust fund would be depleted at that point.

What are the implications for that? As we sit here even now and talk about things like expansion of the debt limit, the implications are that all of the funding for Medicare for the hospitalizations, for the physicians part, for the pharmaceutical part, all of the funding would come strictly out of the general revenues, that part that is paid by the taxpayers every year.

Are there things that could be done under the trustees' report to prevent this from happening? There are. And one of those things would be to raise the tax on the payroll tax that is paid by individuals for their Medicare. All of us pay a 1.2 percent tax. The employer matches with a similar amount, so that comes out of our paychecks every 2 weeks or every month. However we are paid, there would be a way to increase that tax to perhaps sustain Medicare farther into the future.